



No. 157 Rs. 2.50

Manonmani



RETOLD FROM
FAMOUS TAMIL CLASSIC

FAM Chanka

Tamil literature is a rich storehouse of poetry and prose. Yet there was no play in Tamil till the end of the nineteenth century. Sundaram Pillai, a great admirer of Shakespeare, first introduced the play as a literary form.

His play *Manonmaniyam*, has, apart from elements of mystery and romance, an underlying allegory. Jeevakan, the soul, shrouded in *maya* characterised by Kudilan, comes to grief. Sundara Muni, the guiding spirit, brings enlightenment at the appropriate moment

The story of Manonmani, an unaffected, simple girl, who finds her love blossoming after a crisis, has long been popular in Tamil Nadu; and though Tamil drama has come a long way since Pillai wrote *Manonmaniyam*, this pioneering play continues to be studied by students of Tamil literature.

Amar Chitra Katha is a continuing series.
Over 190 titles now on sale.

© India Book House Education Trust, Bombay-400 039
All rights reserved

Published by H.G. Mirchandani, for India Book House Education Trust, 29, Wodehouse Road, Bombay-400 039 and printed by H.K. Nasta at IBH Printers, Marol Naka, Mathuradas Vissanji Road, Andheri (East), Bombay-400 059.

Editor: Anant Pai

Script: Lalitha Raghupathi

Illustrations: Varnam

MANONMANI



MANONMANI WAS THE ONLY CHILD OF JEEVAKAN, THE WEAK PANDYA KING. UNDER THE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF THE SAGE, SUNDARA, HOWEVER, THE KING RULED WELL AND HIS SUBJECTS WERE HAPPY...

... ALL EXCEPT HIS CUNNING CHIEF MINISTER, KUDILAN.



A FEW
DAYS
LATER



JEEVAKAN, I'VE COME
TO TAKE LEAVE OF YOU.
I AM GOING AWAY ON
A PILGRIMAGE TO
THE GANGA.

I'LL BE LOST, WITHOUT
YOU. PLEASE DON'T GO.

BUT THIS WAS THE OPPORTUNITY
KUDILAN HAD BEEN WAITING FOR
AND HE WASN'T GOING TO LOSE IT.



YOUR MAJESTY, IT WOULD
BE SELFISH ON OUR PART
TO COME IN
THE WAY OF
THE SAGE'S
SPIRITUAL
PUR-
SUITS.



YOU ARE RIGHT,
MY ONLY HOPE IS
THAT HE WILL
RETURN SOON.

BEFORE LEAVING, THE SAGE BLESSED MANONMANI.



PRINCESS, MAY YOU
MARRY A VIRTUOUS
AND VALIANT MAN.

SHE CERTAINLY WILL;
FOR IF I CAN ARRANGE
IT, SHE'LL MARRY MY
SON, BALADEVAN.



DURING THE ABSENCE OF THE SAGE, WHILE KUDILAN PLOTTED AND PLANNED, MANONMANI'S EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY CAME ROUND.

OUR PRINCESS CAN BE DESCRIBED AS THE EMBODIMENT OF PANDYA GLORY.

BUT KUDILAN'S WILES WILL STAIN THAT GLORY.



AS THE COUNCILLORS CAME OUT OF THE ROYAL COURT.

OLD AGE AND THE ABSENCE OF THE WISE SAGE HAVE MADE OUR KING BLIND TO KUDILAN'S WICKED WAYS.

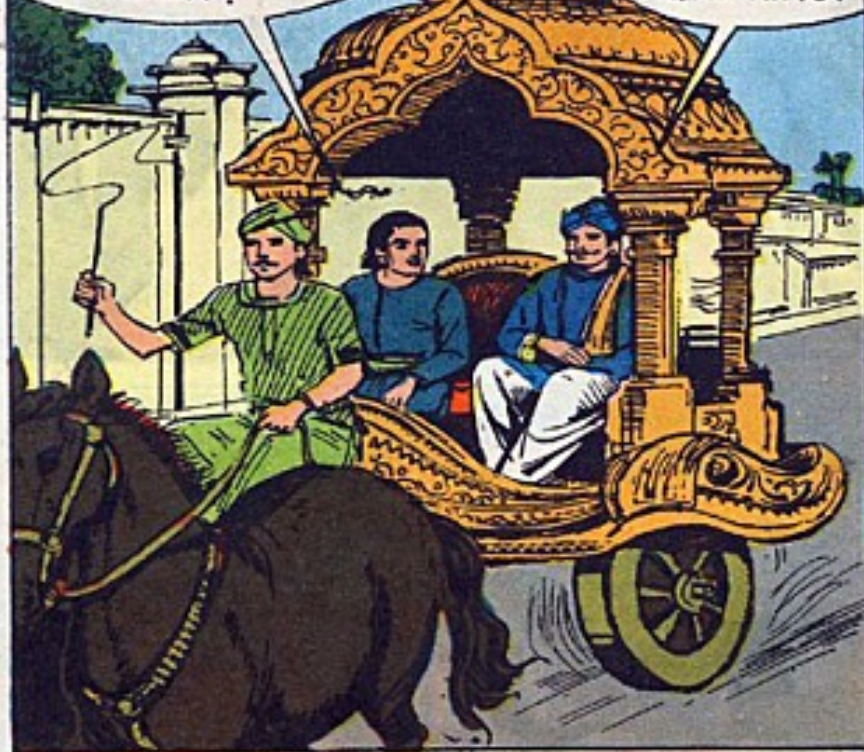
WE SHOULD BE VIGILANT AND PROTECT THE KING FROM HIS MINISTER.



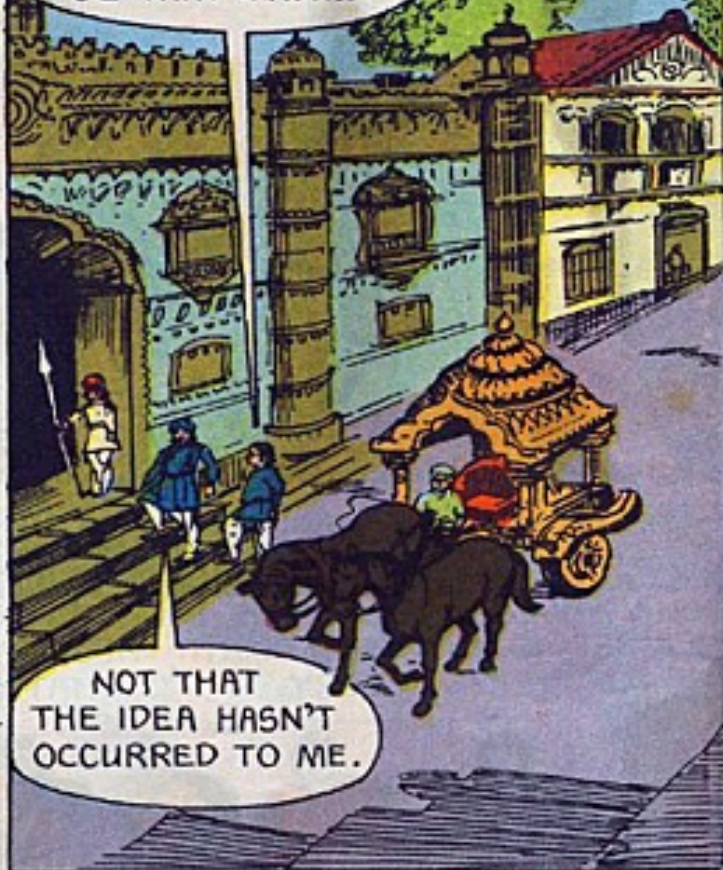
LATER, AS KUDILAN AND HIS SON, BALADEVAN, RODE AWAY FROM THE PALACE—

THE KING IS OLD AND HAS NO SON. WHO DO YOU THINK WILL SUCCEED HIM, FATHER?

THE MAN WHO MARRIES THE PRINCESS WILL BE THE NEXT KING.



FATHER, WITH YOUR INFLUENCE OVER THE KING, I COULD EASILY BE THAT MAN...



NOT THAT THE IDEA HASN'T OCCURRED TO ME.

LATER, WHEN KUDILAN WAS ALONE—

I WILL HAVE TO PLAN MY MOVES CAREFULLY. THE PEOPLE OF MADURAI WILL OTHERWISE RISE IN REBELLION.



TO BEGIN WITH, I MUST GET THE KING TO RULE FROM TIRUNELVELI, MY STRONGHOLD.



A FEW DAYS LATER—

...AND YOUR MAJESTY, BY RULING FROM TIRUNELVELI, YOU MIGHT CHANGE THE VERY COURSE OF HISTORY.

I'LL PUT THE MATTER BEFORE MY COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

NOT ONE AMONG THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, HOWEVER, TOOK KINDLY TO THE PROPOSAL.

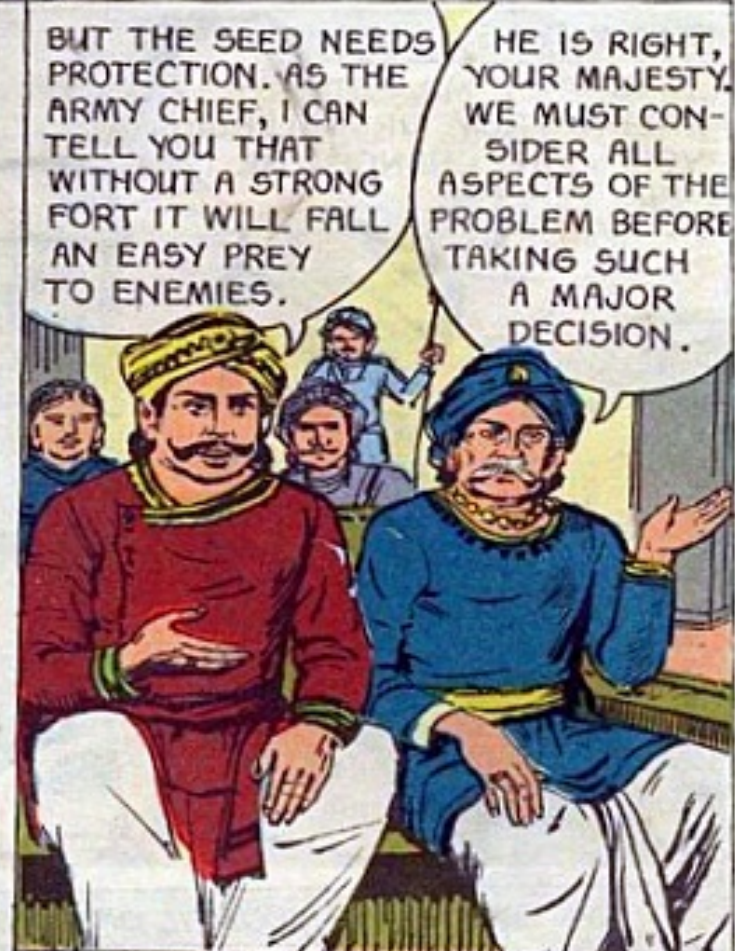
TIRUNELVELI IS TOO SMALL AND TOO FAR AWAY TO BE THE CAPITAL.

A GOOD KING CAN RULE FROM ANYWHERE.

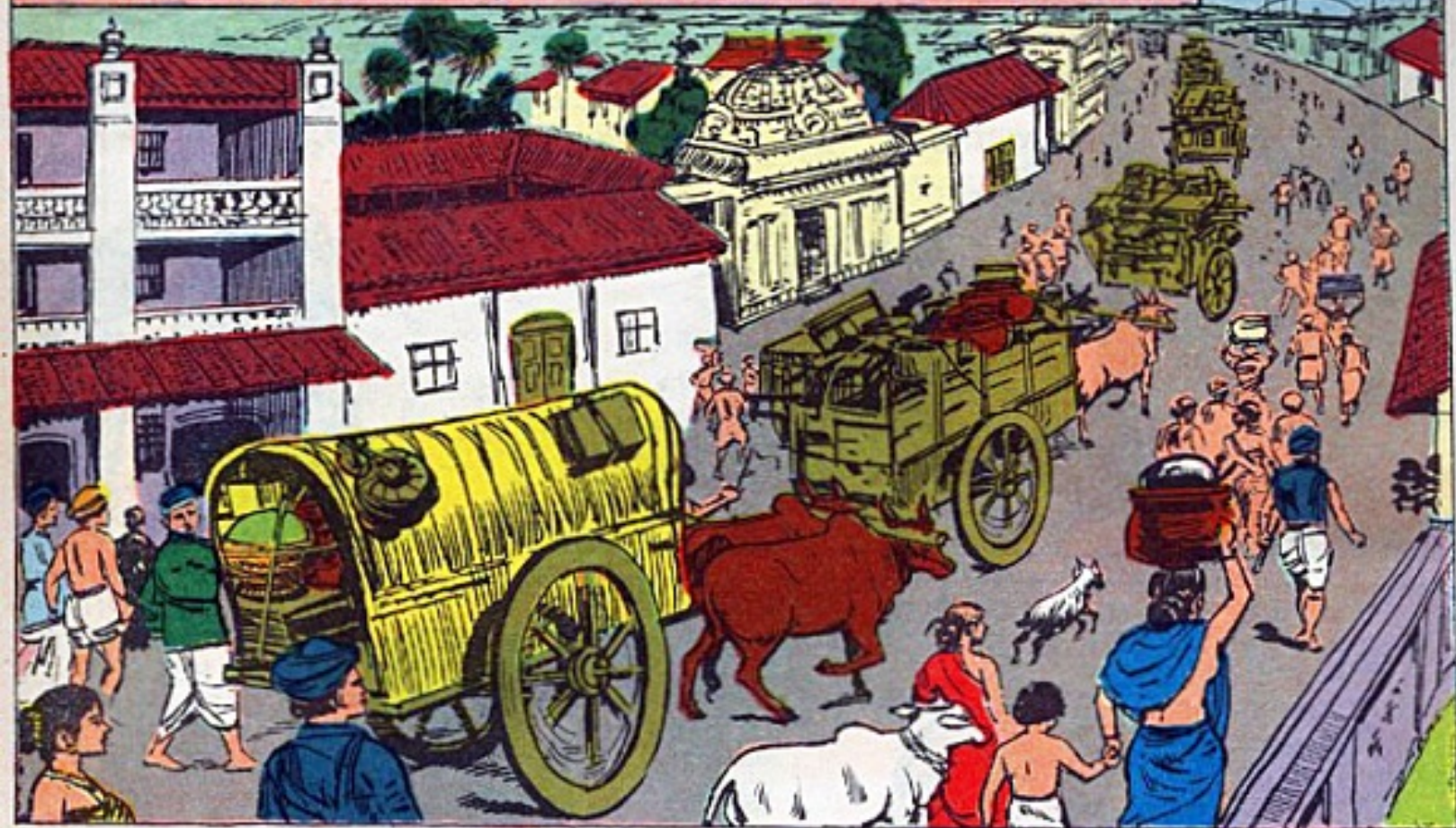
BUT, FATHER, ALL OUR ANCESTORS HAVE RULED FROM MADURAI.

THAT MAY BE TRUE...





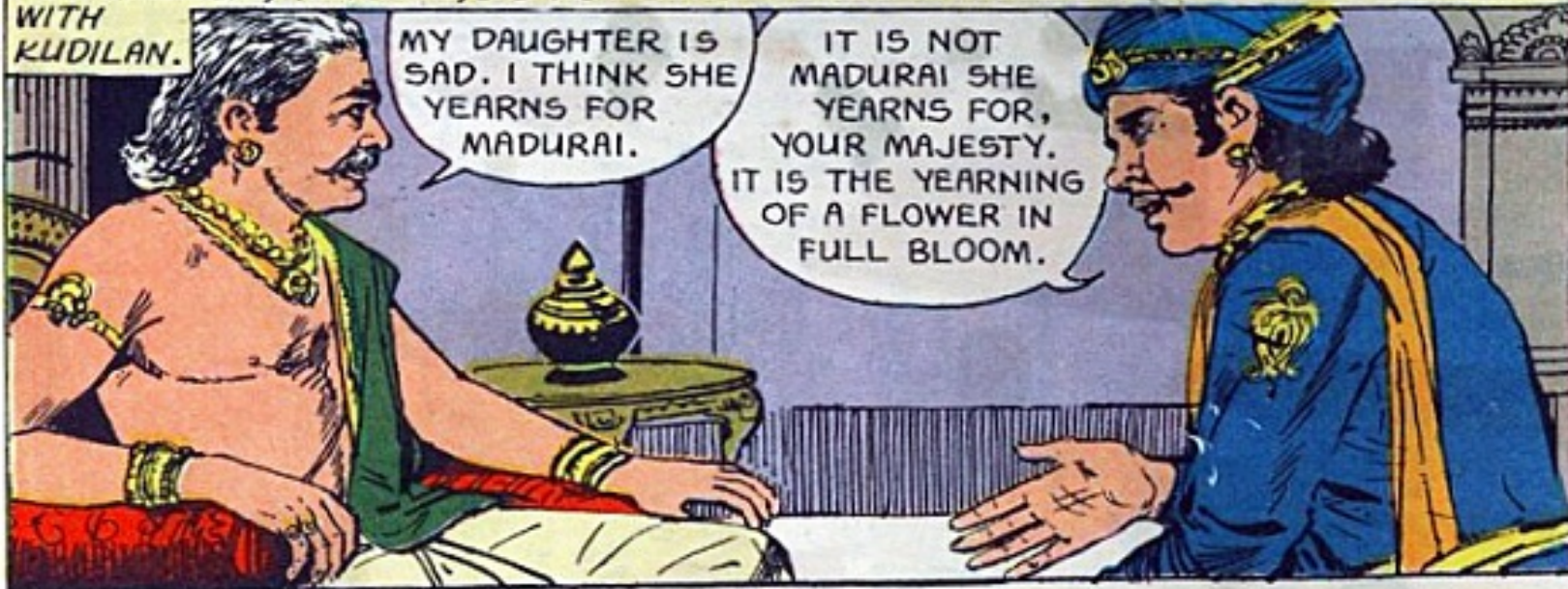
THE KING WASTED NO TIME, AND THE SHIFTING BEGAN FORTHWITH.



TIRUNELVELI BECAME THE CAPITAL OF THE PANDYA KINGDOM BUT MANONMANI WAS NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT.



HER ANSWER, HOWEVER, DID NOT SATISFY JEEVAKAN. HE DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH KUDILAN.



MY DAUGHTER IS SAD. I THINK SHE YEARNS FOR MADURAI.

IT IS NOT MADURAI SHE YEARNS FOR, YOUR MAJESTY. IT IS THE YEARNING OF A FLOWER IN FULL BLOOM.



YOU ARE RIGHT, KUDILAN. IT'S TIME I GOT HER MARRIED.

HE COULDN'T HAVE GIVEN ME A BETTER OPENING.



YOUR MAJESTY, I HAVE A PROPOSAL TO MAKE...

LET IT WAIT TILL SAGE SUNDARA RETURNS.

IN THIS MATTER I CANNOT ACT WITHOUT CONSULTING THE SAGE.

MEANWHILE, THE SAGE HAD RETURNED FROM HIS PILGRIMAGE,
BUT TO MADURAI, THE OLD CAPITAL.

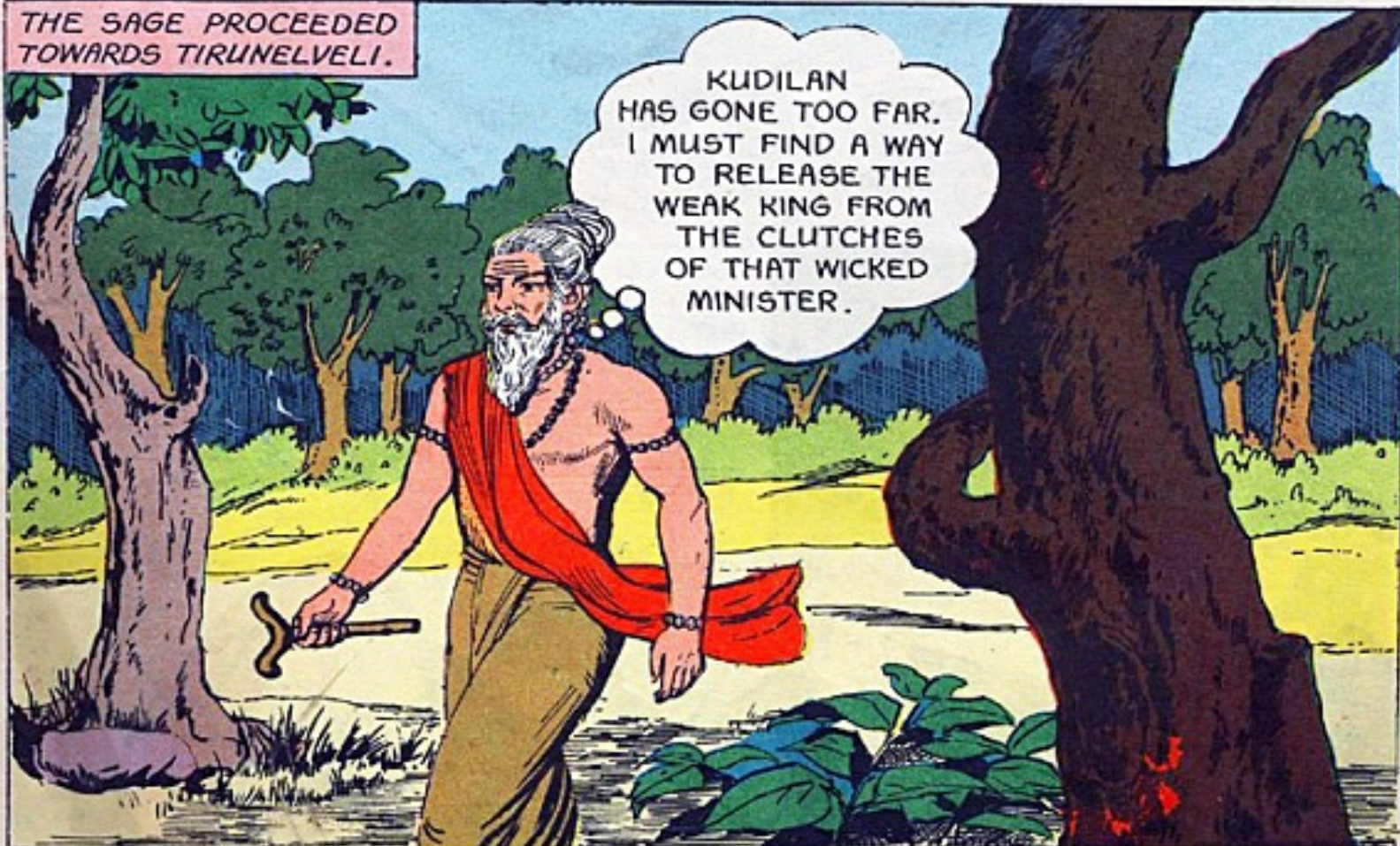
HOLY SAGE, THE KING
NO LONGER LIVES HERE.
TIRUNELVELI IS
HIS NEW CAPITAL.

IT IS KUDILAN'S WORK.
HE SEEMS TO HAVE
SOME STRANGE POWER
OVER THE KING.



THE SAGE PROCEEDED
TOWARDS TIRUNELVELI.

KUDILAN
HAS GONE TOO FAR.
I MUST FIND A WAY
TO RELEASE THE
WEAK KING FROM
THE CLUTCHES
OF THAT WICKED
MINISTER.



AT TIRUNELVELI—

MAY GOD BLESS YOU.

PLEASE BLESS MY
NEW CAPITAL,
TOO, BY LIVING
HERE WITH
US.YES, HOLY SAGE!
PLEASE DON'T
LEAVE US NOW.BUT KUDILAN QUICKLY
INTERVENED.IT IS NOT PROPER FOR
MENDICANTS TO STAY
IN ONE PLACE FOR
TOO LONG.SO YOU WANT ME
OUT OF THE WAY.
BUT I HAVE OTHER
PLANS.JEEVAKAN,
I ACCEPT YOUR
HOSPITALITY
BUT I WANT
A SECLUDED
PLACE TO
LIVE IN.

EAGER TO KEEP HIM IN TIRUNELVELI, THE KING IMMEDIATELY HAD A HERMITAGE SET UP FOR THE SAGE. A FEW DAYS LATER—



LATER, AT THE PALACE—



AS KUDILAN RODE AWAY FROM THE PALACE—



THE MOMENT HE REACHED HOME, BALADEVAN CAME TO SEE HIM.

FATHER, I HEAR THAT MANONMANI IS MARRYING THE CHERA KING. YOU PROMISED...

MANONMANI WILL MARRY YOU AND NO ONE ELSE. NOW BRING NATARAJAN TO ME IMMEDIATELY.

WHEN NATARAJAN CAME—

GO TO MADURAI AT ONCE. TAXES FROM THERE ARE DUE FOR QUITE SOME TIME.

I WILL START IMMEDIATELY, SIR.

AH! I BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND MY FATHER'S PLANS.

THE NEXT DAY, AT THE PALACE—

KUDILAN, DIDN'T YOU SPEAK TO NATARAJAN? HE HAS NOT YET COME TO SEE ME.

HOW STRANGE! YOUR MAJESTY, MY SON BALADEVAN HIMSELF WENT TO HIM.

BALADEVAN WAS SUMMONED.

YOUR MAJESTY, NATARAJAN SAID THAT HE WAS BUSY AND WOULD SEE YOU AFTER HE HAD FINISHED THE WORK ON HAND.



YOUR MAJESTY, HE IS UNRELIABLE. WHY DON'T YOU SEND BALADEVAN INSTEAD? HE, NO LESS THAN MYSELF, IS YOUR SERVANT.

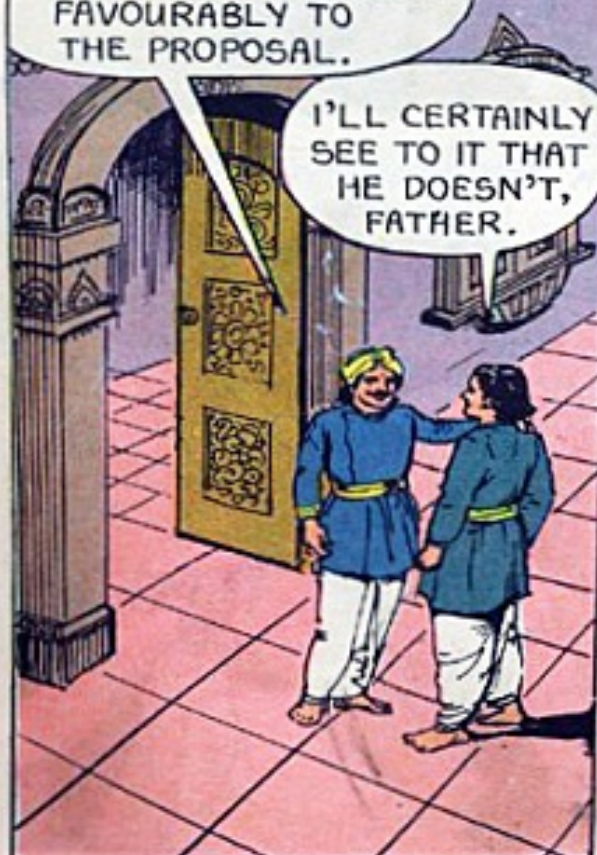
A GOOD SUGGESTION. BALADEVAN, YOU MAY LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.



LATER—

GO, BALADEVAN. AND SEE THAT THE CHERA KING DOESN'T RESPOND FAVOURABLY TO THE PROPOSAL.

I'LL CERTAINLY SEE TO IT THAT HE DOESN'T, FATHER.



MEANWHILE, IN THE PALACE GARDEN—

YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE YOURSELF. WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU, PRINCESS?

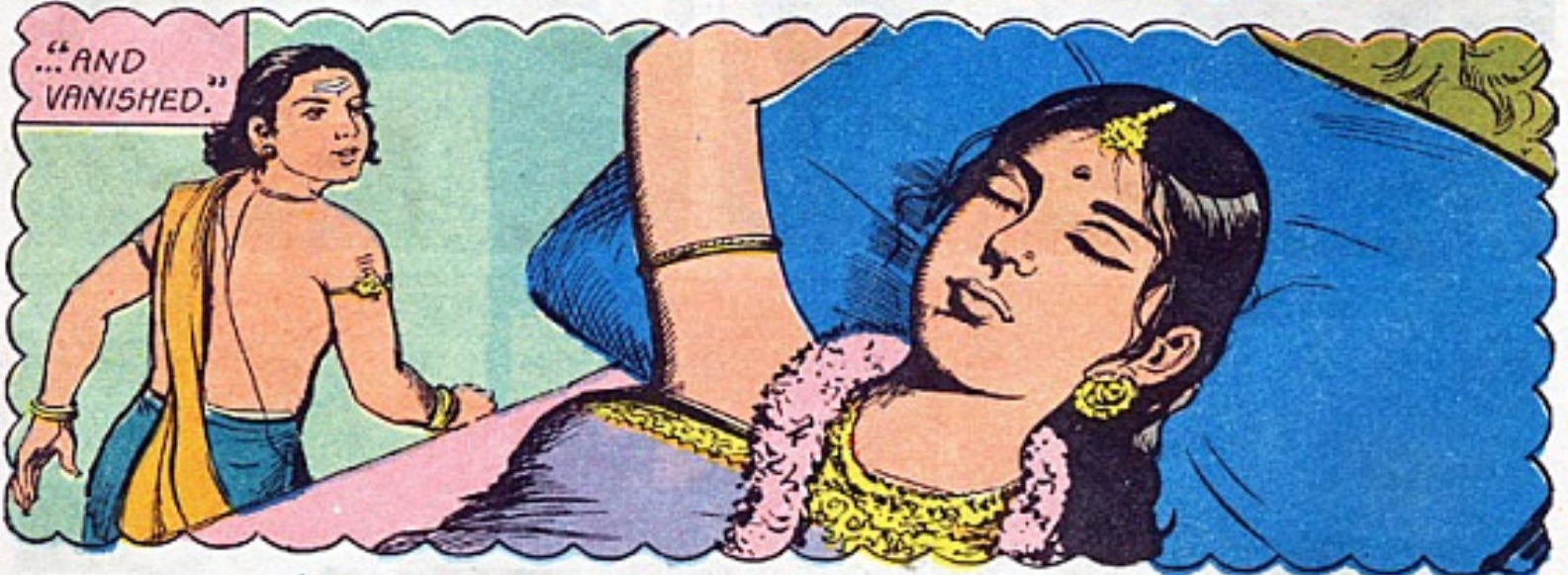
I CAN TELL YOU ABOUT IT, DEAR VANI. I HAD A STRANGE DREAM LAST NIGHT.



"A HANDSOME
PRINCE
GARLANDED ME..."



"...AND
VANISHED."



WHO IS HE?
WHERE DOES
HE LIVE?

I DON'T KNOW,
BUT I WILL
MARRY HIM AND
NO ONE ELSE.



AT THAT VERY MOMENT, MILES AWAY,
THE CHERA KING, PURUSHOTHAMAN,
WAS ALSO TROUBLED BY A DREAM.



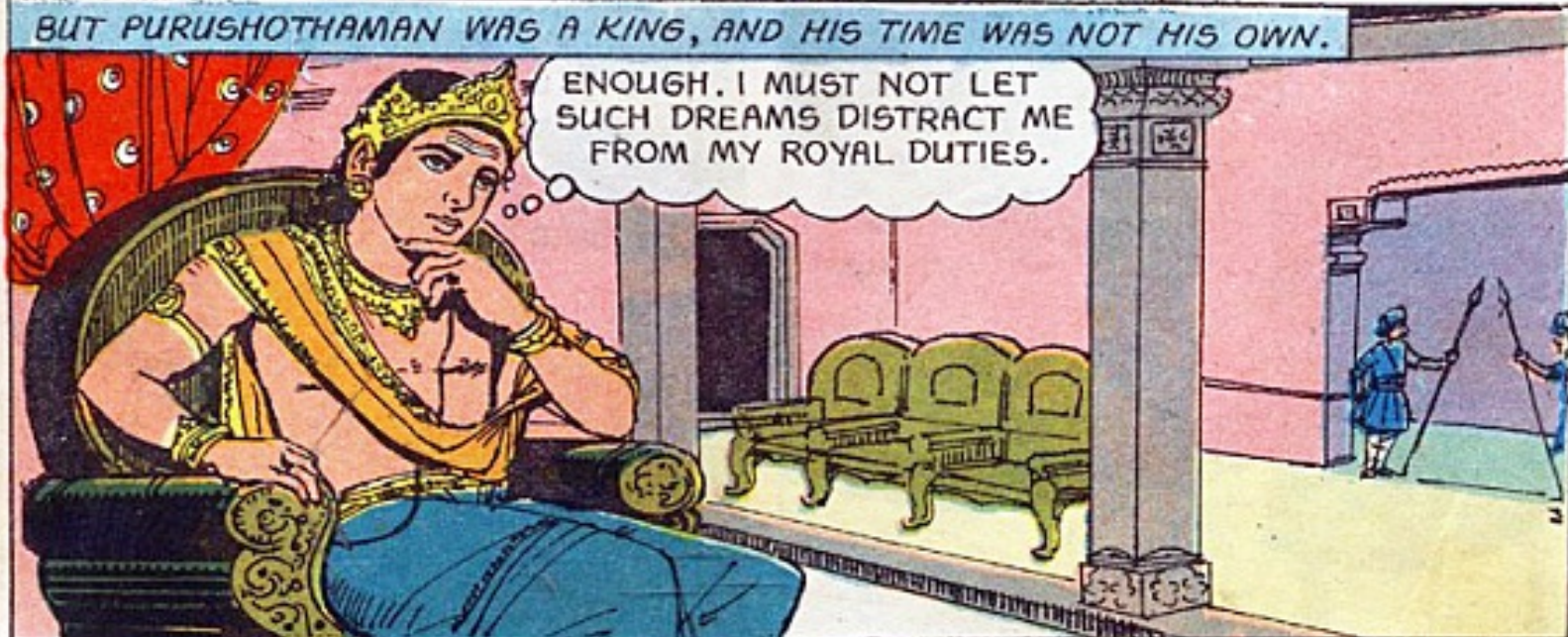
HE WOKE UP IN A DAZE.

WHERE IS SHE? WHO
IS SHE? WHOEVER SHE
IS, SHE HAS STOLEN
MY PEACE.



BUT PURUSHOTHAMAN WAS A KING, AND HIS TIME WAS NOT HIS OWN.

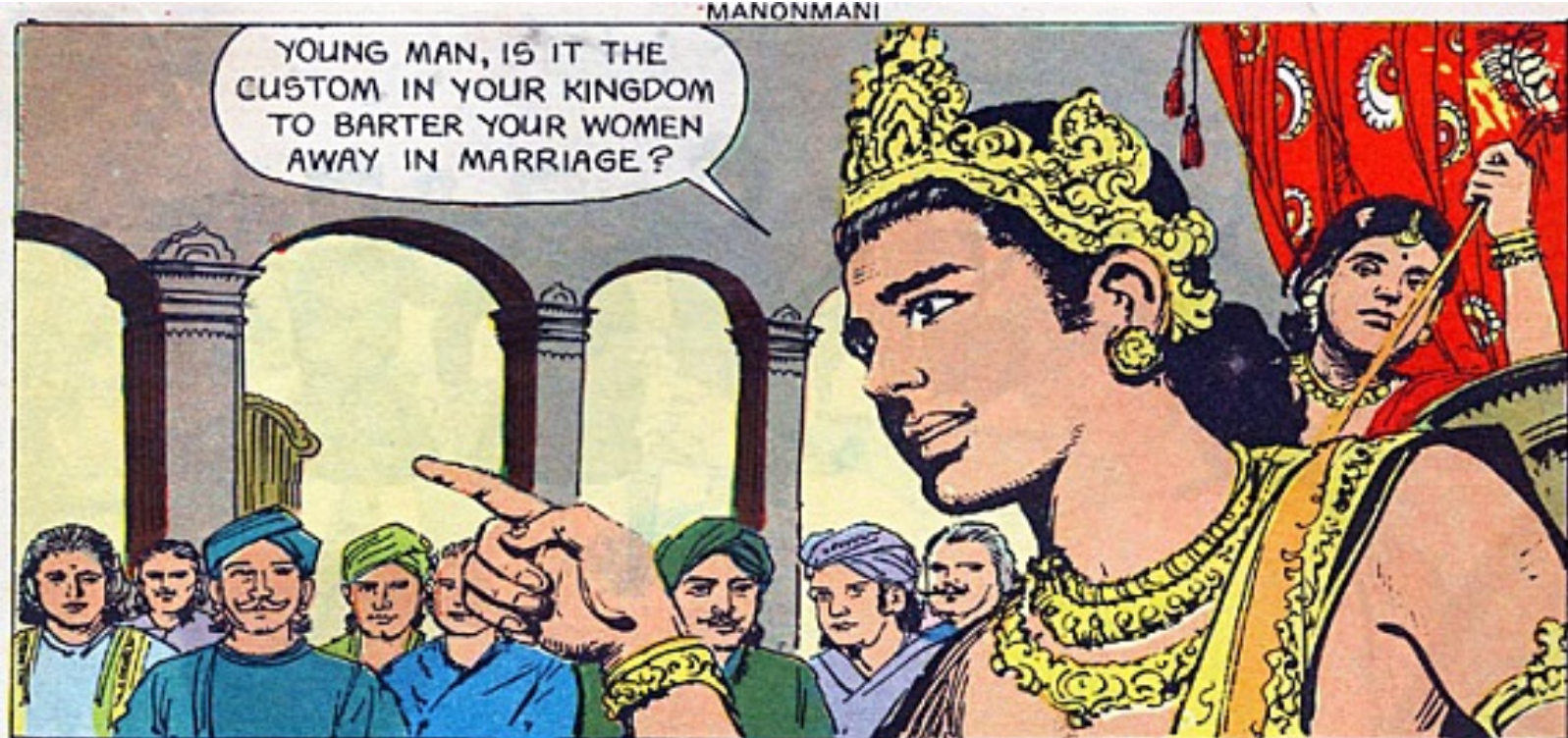
ENOUGH. I MUST NOT LET
SUCH DREAMS DISTRACT ME
FROM MY ROYAL DUTIES.



LATER, AS PURUSHOTHAMAN SAT ON HIS THRONE AT COURT, NOT A TRACE OF HIS DISTURBING DREAM SHOWED ON HIS COUNTENANCE.



YOUNG MAN, IS IT THE CUSTOM IN YOUR KINGDOM TO BARTER YOUR WOMEN AWAY IN MARRIAGE?



THE UNPAID ARREARS CAN BE PART OF HER DOWRY. YOU GAIN A WIFE TOO.

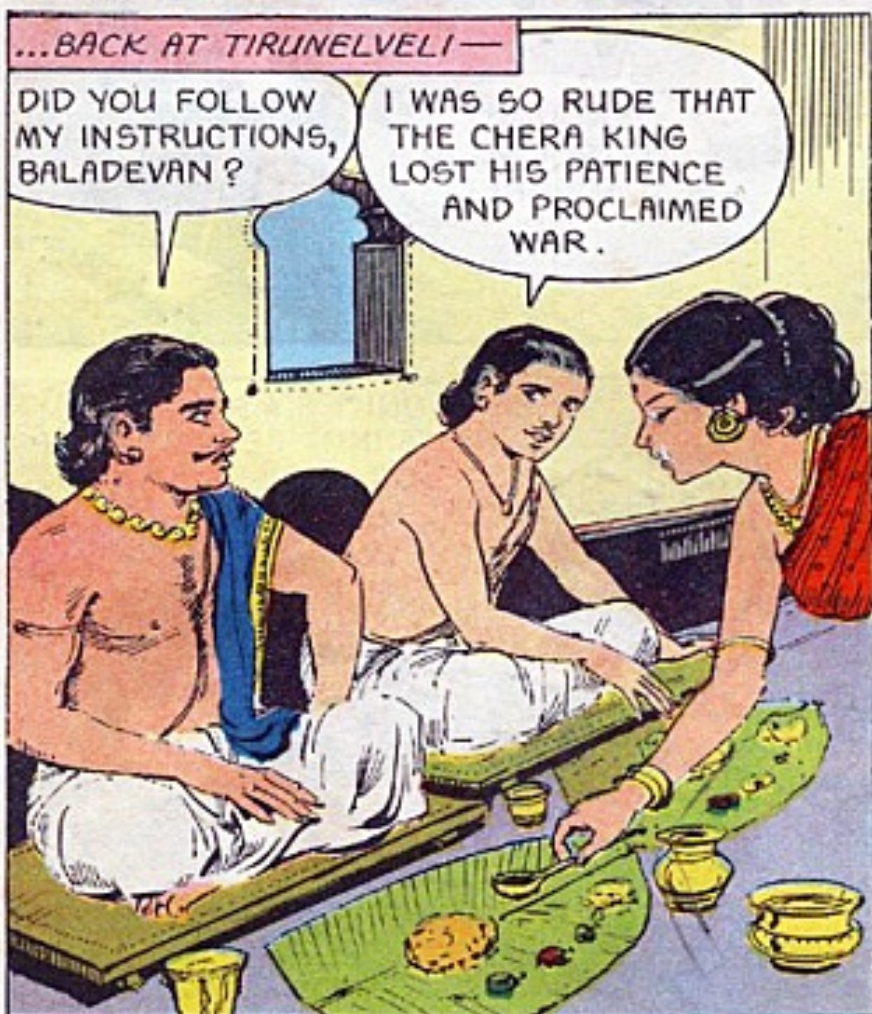
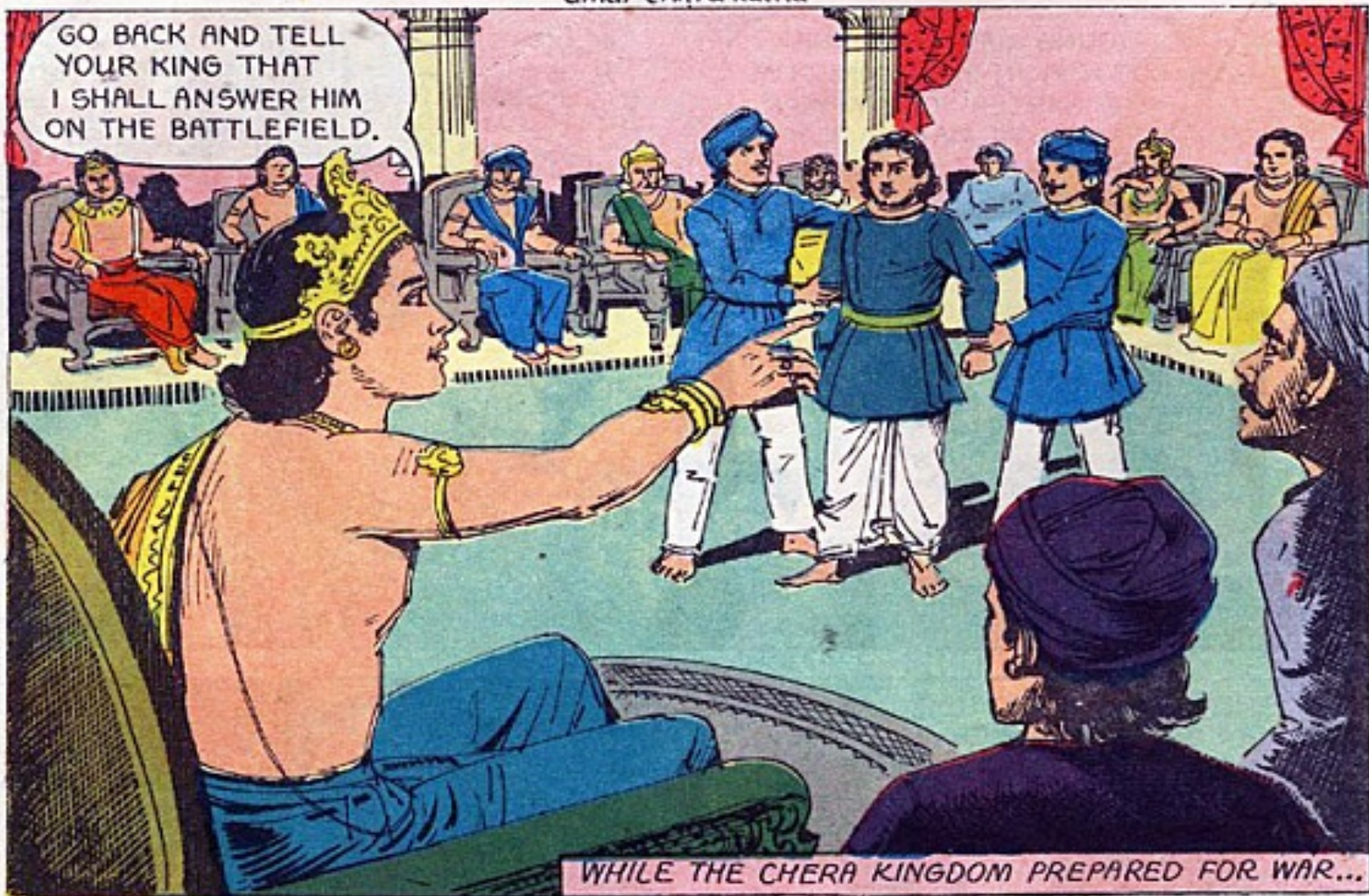
ENOUGH! CONTROL YOUR TONGUE!

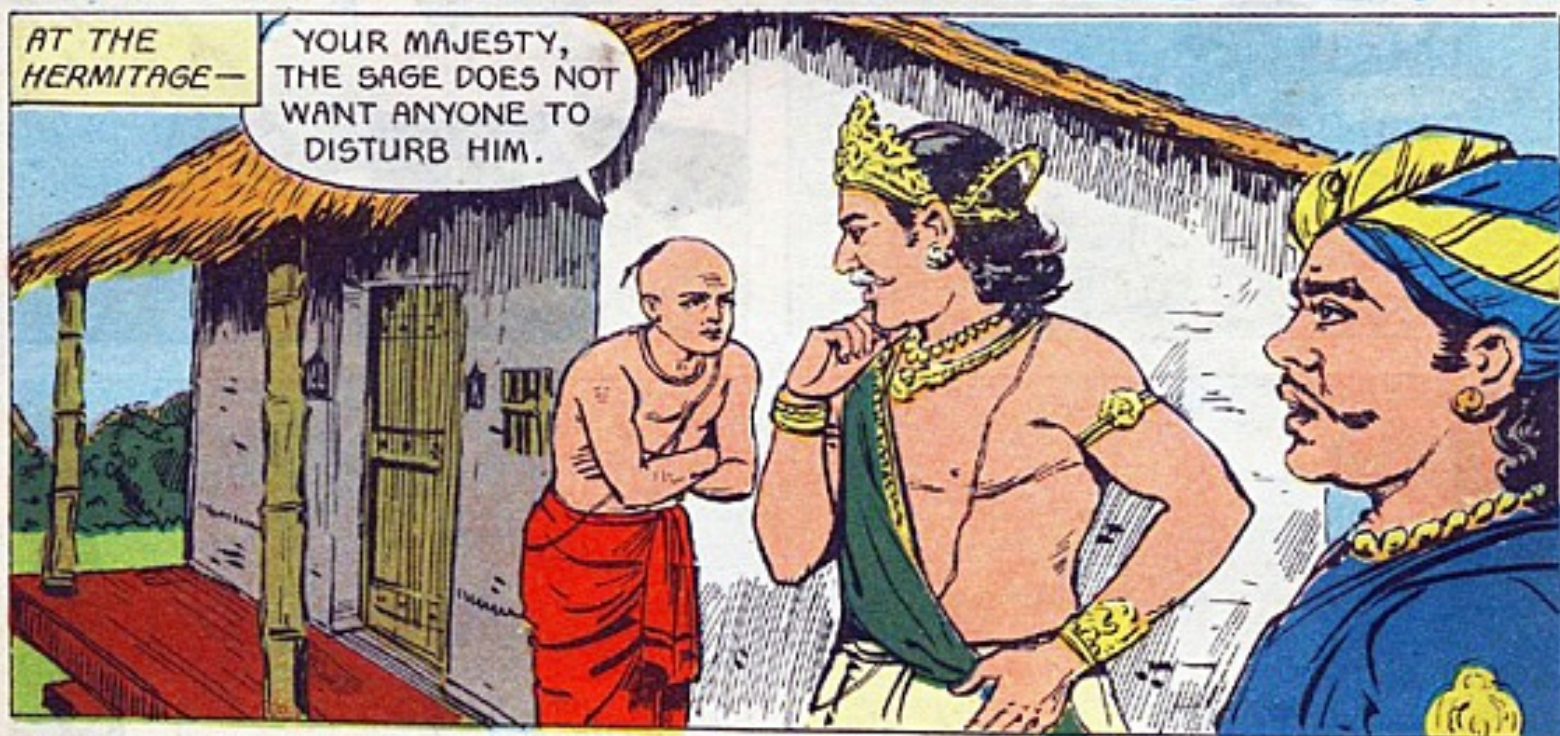


SEND HIM TO PRISON, YOUR MAJESTY. BIND HIS FEET AND HANDS.

HE IS ONLY A MESSENGER. HE CANNOT BE BLAMED OR PUNISHED.









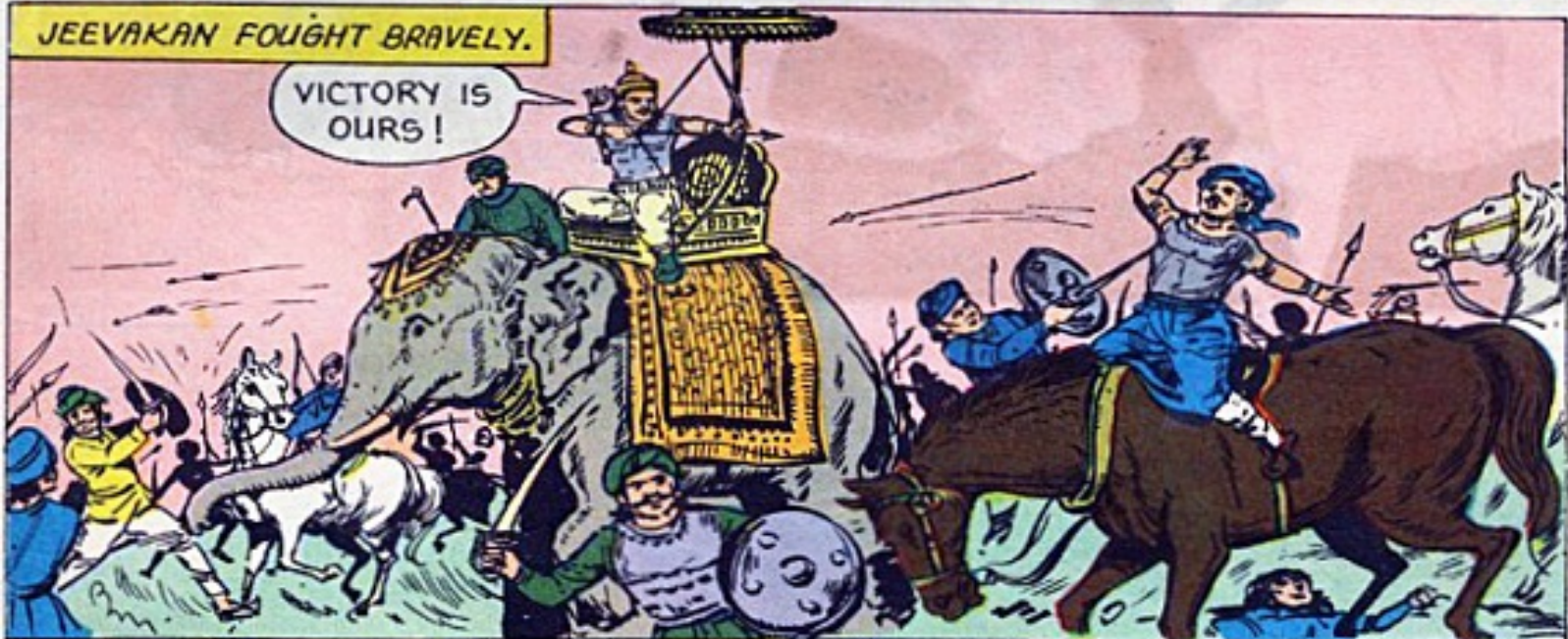
SUPPOSING OUR KING WINS?
YOUR PLANS WILL FALL
THROUGH THEN; WON'T
THEY, FATHER?

WIN OR LOSE, THE KING
SHALL DIE ON THE
BATTLEFIELD,
BALADEVAN!



JEEVAKAN FOUGHT BRAVELY.

VICTORY IS
OURS!



EVEN THE
CHERA KING
ADMIRED
HIS OLDER
ADVERSARY.

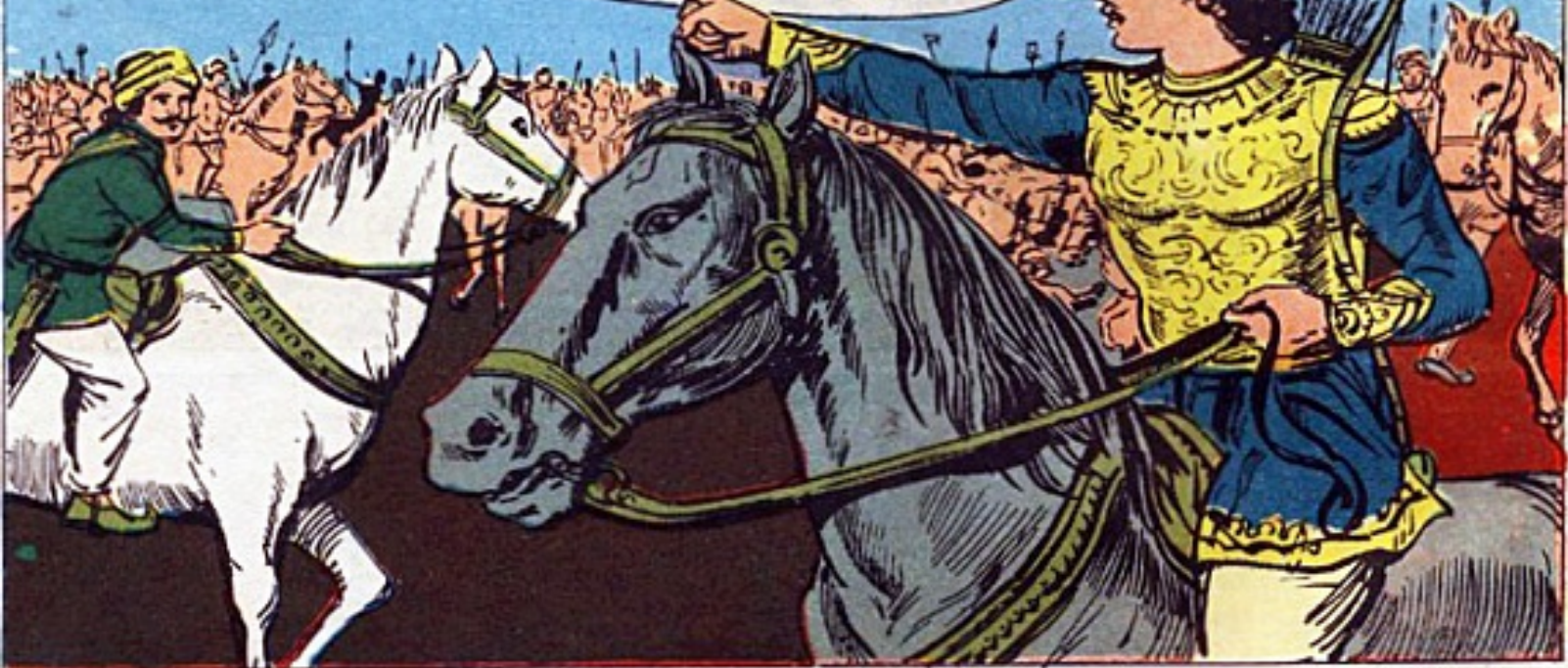
FIGHTING LIKE THE
GOD OF WAR HIMSELF
—AND AT HIS AGE!



WHEN BALADEVAN SAW THAT THEY WERE AT AN ADVANTAGE —

I MUST THINK FAST. THAT'S IT.
I'LL SPLIT THE ARMY.

THE ENEMIES ARE ATTACKING
THE FORT FROM THE OPPOSITE
SIDE. GO THERE, I'LL STAY
HERE.



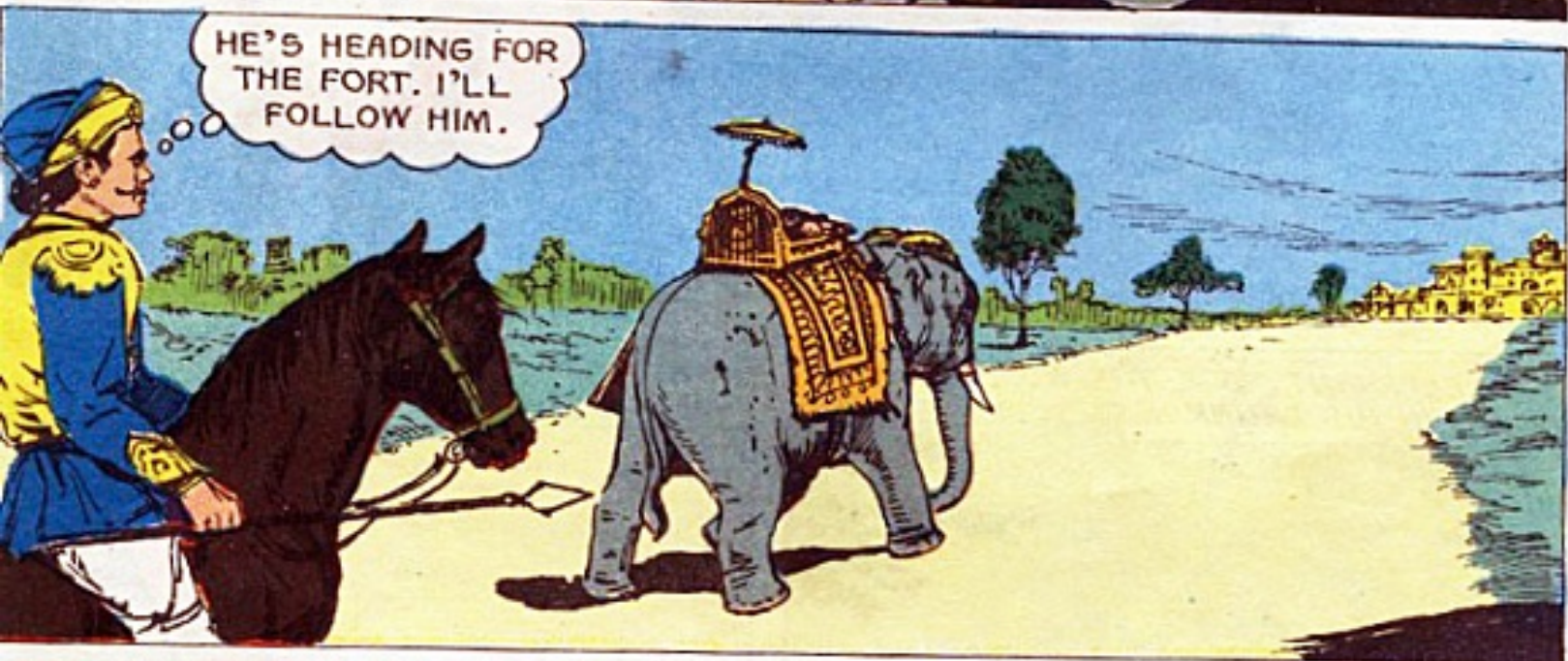
THE COMMANDER TRIED TO CALL THEM
BACK. JEEVAKAN LOOKED ON HELPLESSLY
AS HIS MAHUT, PIERCED BY AN ARROW, FELL.



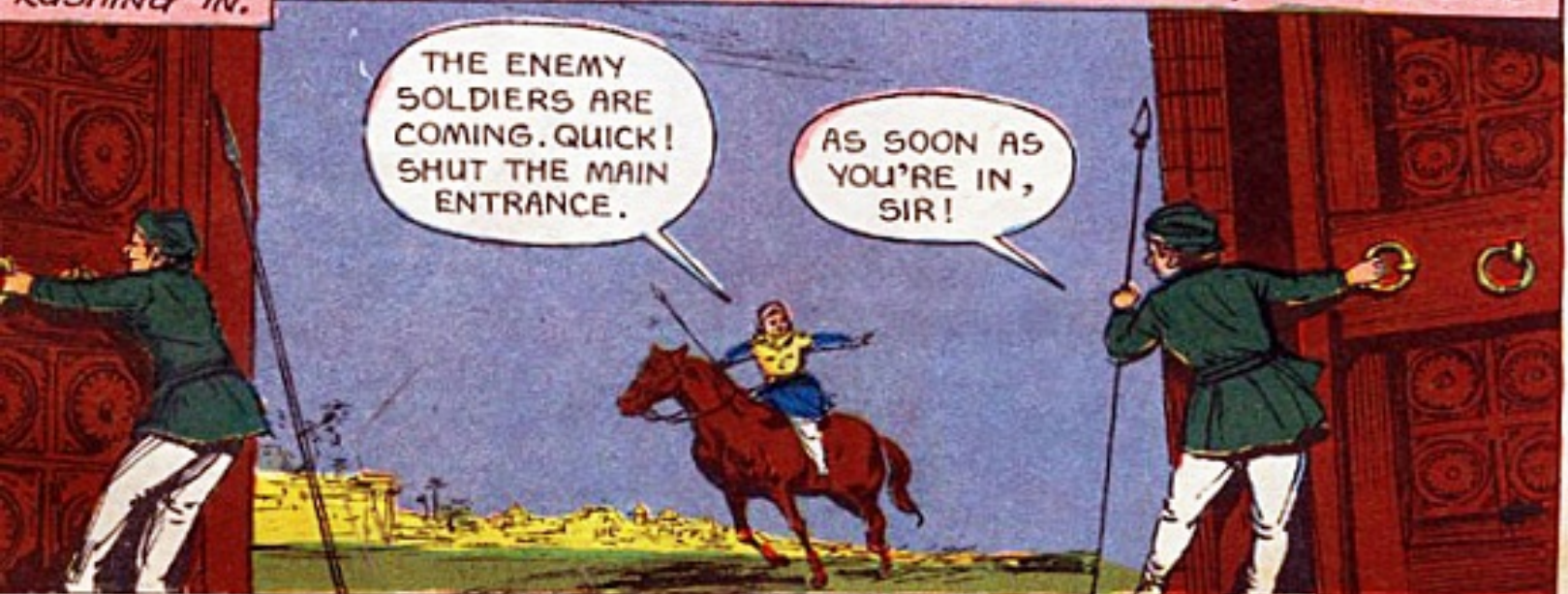
AT THIS INOPPORTUNE MOMENT,
AN ARROW HIT THE KING.



AS THE ELEPHANT CARRIED ITS WOUNDED MASTER TOWARDS THE
FORT, KUDILAN SAW THEM.



SOON AFTER THE ROYAL ELEPHANT ENTERED THE GATES OF THE FORT, KUDILAN CAME
RUSHING IN.



INSIDE THE FORT, THE SAGE SAW THEM APPROACH.

POOR JEEVAKAN!
WHAT A PRICE
TO PAY FOR
MISPLACED
TRUST!



THE ELEPHANT TOOK THE WOUNDED
KING IN HIS TRUNK...



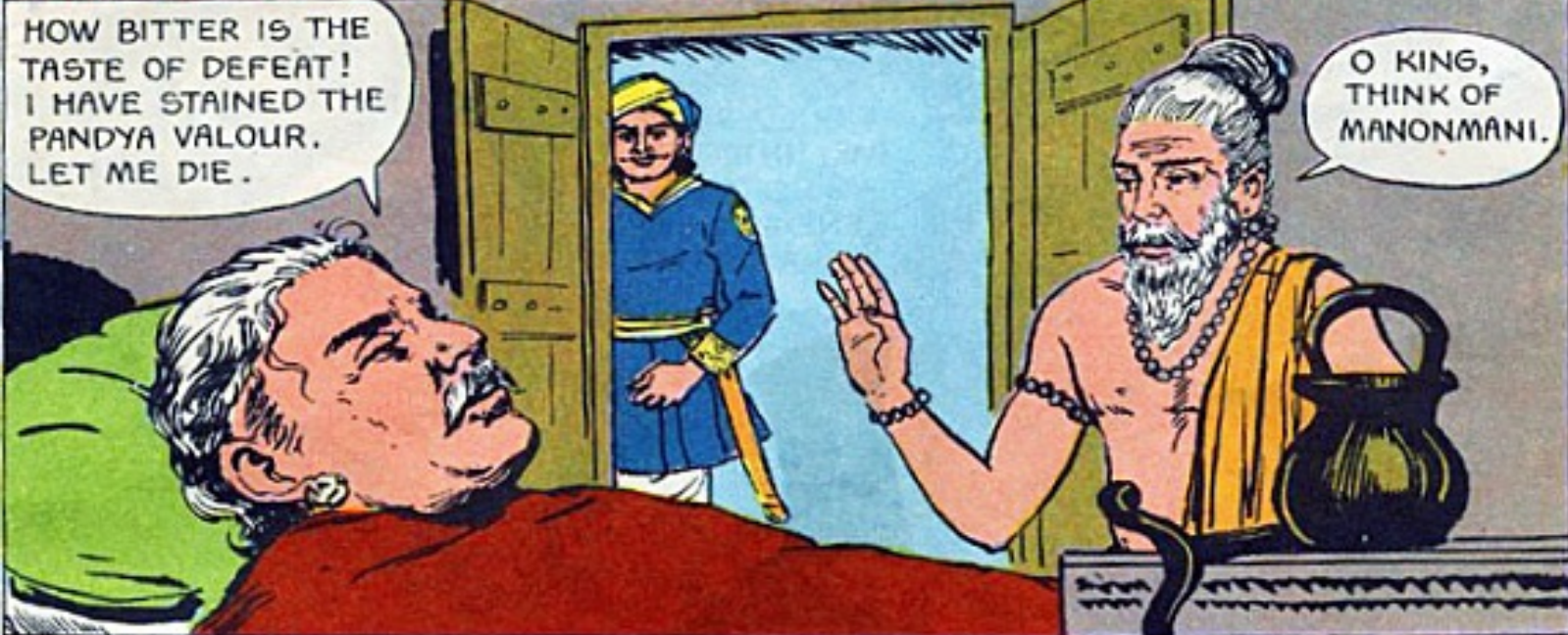
...AND PLACED HIM GENTLY IN THE
WAITING ARMS OF THE SAGE.



WITH THE SAGE'S CARE, JEEVAKAN SOON REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS.

HOW BITTER IS THE
TASTE OF DEFEAT!
I HAVE STAINED THE
PANDYA VALOUR.
LET ME DIE.

O KING,
THINK OF
MANONMANI.



YES, I HAVE YET
TO GET HER
MARRIED.

YOUR MAJESTY,
WHY DON'T YOU
MARRY HER
TO MY SON,
BALADEVAN?




JUST THEN MANONMANI
HERSELF CAME RUNNING
IN, FOLLOWED BY
BALADEVAN.


FATHER, ARE
YOU ALL
RIGHT?








ONE MOMENT, YOUR MAJESTY.
BEFORE YOU USE THIS TUNNEL,
WE SHOULD MAKE SURE
THAT ENEMY SOLDIERS
ARE NOT ANYWHERE
NEAR THE EXIT.



LET ME GO
AHEAD ALONE AND
SEE IF THE WAY
IS CLEAR.

IT IS KIND
OF YOU TO
DO SO.

AS KUDILAN MADE HIS WAY THROUGH THE TUNNEL—

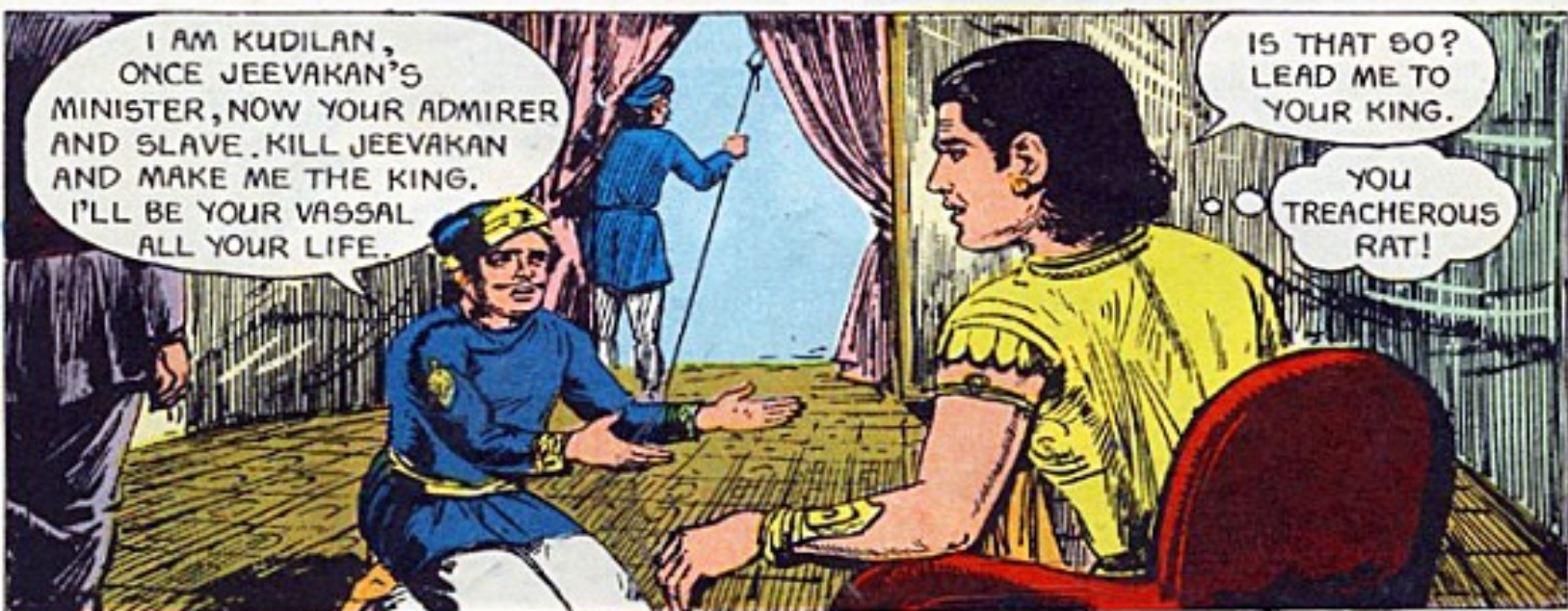


SO THE SAGE WILL
FOIL MY PLANS, WILL
HE! I HAVE ONLY
ONE WAY OUT.

MEANWHILE, AT THE CAMP OF PURUSHOTHAMAN, THE CHERA KING—

JEEVAKAN HAS WITHDRAWN INTO HIS FORT. WE WILL HAVE TO ATTACK THE FORT.

WE HAVE NO CHANCE, MY LORD. THE FORT IS IMPREGNABLE.



MEANWHILE, AT THE COTTAGE OF THE SAGE—

HOLY ONE, I WILL HAVE PEACE OF MIND ONLY IF MANONMANI IS MARRIED. AND BALADEVAN IS SO LOYAL.

B...BUT FATHER...



BEFORE MANONMANI COULD SAY ANOTHER WORD—

THEN LET MANONMANI GET READY FOR THE CEREMONY, JEEVAKAN.

BUT IF MY CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT, BALADEVAN WILL NOT BE THE GROOM.



PREPARATIONS WERE HURRIEDLY MADE. MANONMANI WAS ABOUT TO BE MARRIED.



SUDDENLY—

THERE HE IS!
THAT'S JEEVAKAN.
KILL HIM.



**BUT TO KUDILAN'S SURPRISE,
PURUSHOTHAMAN WHIRLED ROUND.**

YOU WORM! YOU TRAITOR!
DID YOU BELIEVE THAT
I WOULD KILL THE
VALIANT KING? IT'S YOU
WHO SHALL DIE.

MERCY,
MY LORD!



FALL AT
THE FEET OF
YOUR KING!

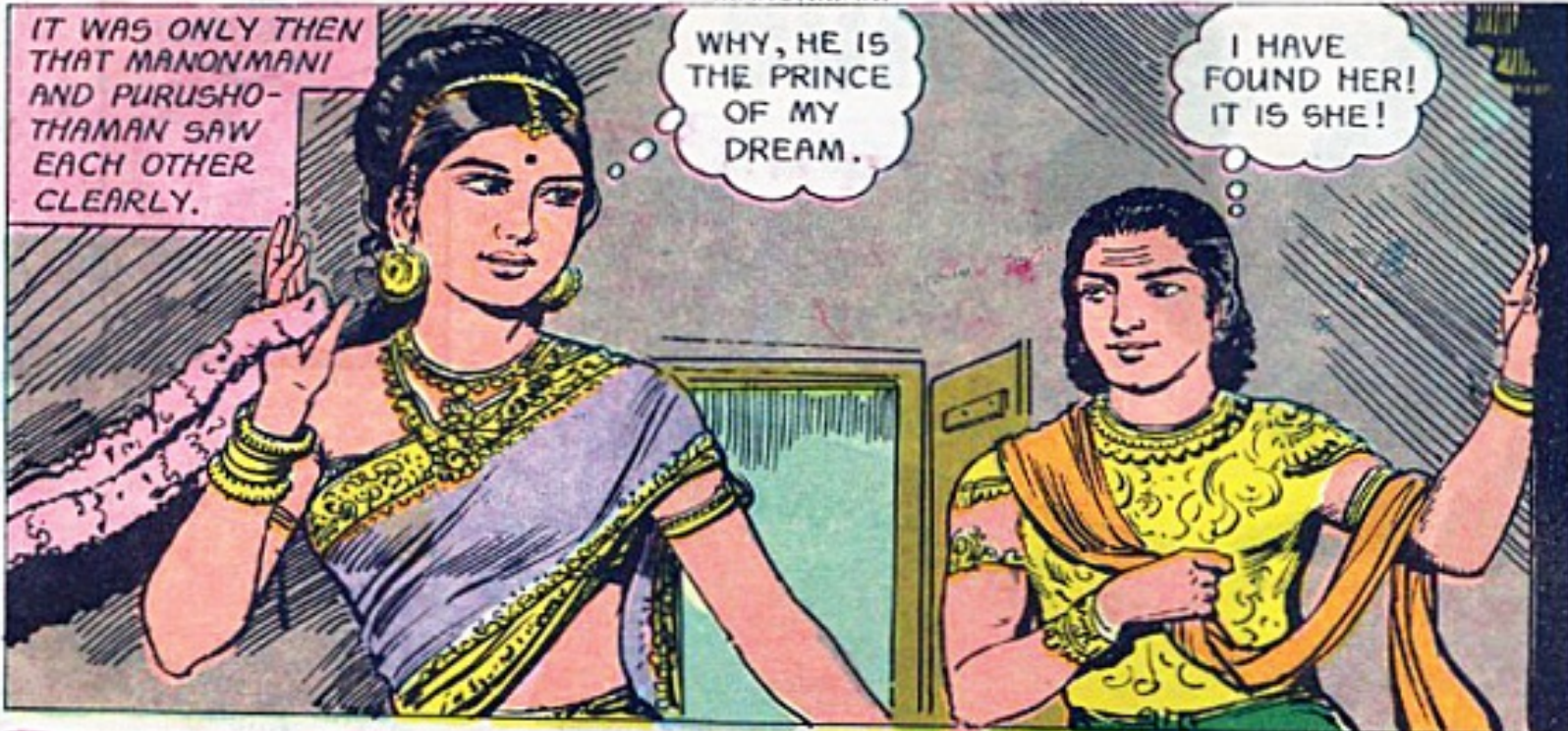
I AM GRATEFUL TO YOU,
PURUSHOTHAMAN.
YOU ARE MAGNANI-
MOUS. KUDILAN AND
HIS SON SHALL BE
BANISHED FROM MY
KINGDOM
FOREVER.



IT WAS ONLY THEN THAT MANONMANI AND PURUSHOTHAMAN SAW EACH OTHER CLEARLY.

WHY, HE IS THE PRINCE OF MY DREAM.

I HAVE FOUND HER! IT IS SHE!



AND WALKING IN A DREAM AS IT WERE, MANONMANI WENT UP TO PURUSHOTHAMAN AND GARLANDED HIM.

LATER, AS JEEVAKAN AND PURUSHOTHAMAN SAT TALKING IN THE PALACE ABOUT THE UNNECESSARY BLOODSHED THAT HAD BEEN CAUSED BY THE EVIL KUDILAN AND BALADEVAN—

IT IS MY FAULT. BALADEVAN'S BEHAVIOUR SHOULD HAVE MADE ME SUSPECT THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG SOMEWHERE.

WHEN THE MINISTER AND HIS SON COULD DUPE ME, THEIR KING, WHY DO YOU BLAME YOURSELF?





AMAR CHITRA KATHA

- 11 KRISHNA
- 12 SHAKUNTALA
- 13 THE PANDAVA PRINCES
- 14 SAVITRI
- 15 RAMA
- 16 NALA DAMAYANTI
- 17 HARISCHANDRA
- 18 THE SONS OF RAMA
- 19 HANUMAN
- 20 MAHABHARATA
- 21 CHANAKYA
- 22 BUDDHA
- 23 SHIVAJI
- 24 RANA PRATAP
- 25 PRITHVIRAJ CHAUHAN
- 26 KARNA
- 27 KACHA
- 28 VIKRAMADITYA
- 29 SHIVA PARVATI
- 30 VASAVADATTA
- 31 SUDAMA
- 32 GURU GOBIND SINGH
- 33 HARSHA
- 34 BHEESHMA
- 35 ABHIMANYU
- 36 MIRABAI
- 37 ASHOKA
- 38 PRAHLAD
- 39 PANCHATANTRA I
- 40 TANAJI
- 41 CHHATRASAL
- 42 PARASHURAMA
- 43 BANDA BAHADUR
- 44 PADMINI
- 45 JATAKA TALES I
- 46 VALMIKI
- 47 GURU NANAK
- 48 TARABAI
- 49 RANJIT SINGH
- 50 RAM SHASTRI
- 51 RAN-OF JHANSI
- 52 ULOOPI
- 53 BAJI RAO I
- 54 CHAND BIBI
- 55 KABIR
- 56 SHER SHAH
- 57 DRONA
- 58 SURYA
- 59 URVASHI
- 60 ADI SHANKARA
- 61 GHATOTKACHA
- 62 TULSIDAS
- 63 SUKANYA
- 64 DURGADAS
- 65 ANIRUDDHA
- 66 ZARATHUSHTRA
- 67 THE LORD OF LANKA
- 68 TUKARAM
- 69 AGASTYA
- 70 VASANTASENA
- 71 INDRA & SHACHI
- 72 DRAUPADI
- 73 SUBHADRA
- 74 AHILYABAI HOLKAR
- 75 TANSEN
- 76 SUNDARI
- 77 SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
- 78 SHRIDATTA
- 79 JATAKA TALES II

- 80 VISHWAMITRA
- 81 THE SYAMANTAKA GEM
- 82 MAHAVIRA
- 83 VIKRAMADITYA'S THRONE
- 84 BAPPA RAWAL
- 85 AYYAPPAN
- 86 ANANDA MATH
- 87 BIRBAL THE JUST
- 88 GANGA
- 89 GANESHA
- 90 CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU
- 91 HITOPADESHA I
- 92 SAKSHI GOPAL
- 93 KANNAGI
- 94 NARSINH MEHTA
- 95 JASMA OF THE ODES
- 96 SHARAN KAUR
- 97 CHANDRAHASA
- 98 PUNDALIK & SAKHU
- 99 RAJ SINGH
- 100 PURUSHOTTAM DEV & PADMAVATI
- 101 VALI
- 102 NAGANANDA
- 103 MALAVIKA
- 104 RANI DURGAVATI
- 105 DASHARATHA
- 106 RANA SANGA
- 107 PRADYUMNA
- 108 VIDYASAGAR
- 109 TACHCHOLI OTHENAN
- 110 SULTANA RAZIA

**Acquaint your
children with their
cultural heritage**

- 111 SATI & SHIVA
- 112 KRISHNA & RUKMINI
- 113 RAJA BHOJA
- 114 GURU TEGH BAHADUR
- 115 PAREEKSHIT
- 116 KADAMBARI
- 117 DHURVA & ASHTAVAKRA
- 118 KING KUSHA
- 119 RAJA RAJA CHOLA
- 120 DAYANANDA
- 121 VEER DHAVAL
- 122 ANCESTORS OF RAMA
- 123 EKANATH
- 124 SATWANT KAUR
- 125 UDAYANA
- 126 JATAKA TALES III
- 127 THE GITA
- 128 VEER HAMMIR
- 129 MALATI & MADHAVA
- 130 GARUDA
- 131 BIRBAL THE WISE
- 132 RANAK DEVI
- 133 MARYADA RAMA
- 134 BABUR
- 135 DEVI CHOUDHURANI
- 136 RABINDRANATH TAGORE
- 137 SOORDAS
- 138 PANCHATANTRA II
- 139 PRINCE HRITADHWAJA
- 140 HUMAYUN
- 141 PRABHAVATI
- 142 CHANDRA SHEKHAR AZAD

- 143 A BAG OF GOLD COINS
- 144 PURANDRA DASA
- 145 BHANUMATI
- 146 VIVEKANANDA
- 147 KRISHNA & JARASANDHA
- 148 NOOR JAHAN
- 149 ELEPHANTA
- 150 TALES OF NARADA
- 151 KRISHNADEVA RAYA
- 152 BIRBAL THE WITTY
- 153 MADHVACHARYA
- 154 CHANDRA GUPTA MAURYA
- 155 JNANESHWAR
- 156 BAGHA JATIN
- 157 MANONMANI
- 158 ANGULIMALA
- 159 THE TIGER AND THE WOODPECKER
- 160 TALES OF VISHNU
- 161 AMRAPALI
- 162 YAYATI
- 163 PANCHATANTRA III
- 164 TALES OF SHIVA
- 165 KING SHALIVAHANA
- 166 THE RANI OF KITTUR
- 167 KRISHNA & NARAKASURA
- 168 THE MAGIC GROVE
- 169 LACHIT BARPHEKUN
- 170 INDRA AND VRITRA
- 171 AMAR SINGH RATHOR
- 172 KRISHNA & THE FALSE VASUDEVA
- 173 KOCHUNNI
- 174 TALES OF YUDHISHTHIRA
- 175 HARI SINGH NALWA
- 176 TALES OF DURGA
- 177 KRISHNA AND SHISHUPALA
- 178 RAMAN OF TENALI
- 179 PAURAVA AND ALEXANDER
- 180 INDRA AND SHIBIRAJA
- 181 GURU HAR GOBIND
- 182 THE BATTLE FOR SRINAGAR
- 183 RANA KUMBHA
- 184 ARUNI AND UTTANKA
- 185 HITOPADESHA II
- 186 TIRUPPAN & KANAKADASA
- 187 TIPU SULTAN
- 188 DR. AMBEDKAR
- 189 THUGSEN
- 190 KANNAPPA
- 191 THE KING IN A PARROT'S BODY
- 192 RANADHIRA
- 193 KAPALA KUNDALA
- 194 GOPAL & THE COWHERD
- 195 JATAKA TALES IV
- 196 HOTHAL
- 197 THE RAINBOW PRINCE
- 198 TALES OF ARJUNA
- 199 CHANDRALALAT
- 200 AKBAR

Available at all bookstalls or
from INDIA BOOK HOUSE
Secunderabad-3 (For V.P.P. orders only)
Distributors in USA:
GULMOHR BOOKS
Post Box 1414
Los Altos, Ca. 94022

HISTORY • MYTHOLOGY • LEGEND

Price : Rs. 2.50 each